CHANGES IN OPERATIC MANAGEMENT

THE NEW THEATRE (NOW THE CENTURY)

The Death of Conried and Unfortunate Introduction of His Successor, Gatti-Casazza — Preposterous Claims for His Services

CHAPTER III

Memoirs of a Decade of Opera (Copyright, 1918, by H. E. Krehbiel)

By H. E. Krehbiel of 1906-'07 Mr. Conried had been ill with régime sciatic neurosis. After his retirement from the management in the spring of 1908 he went to Europe in the hope of regaining his health. He died of apoplexy at Meran, Austrian Tyrol, on April 27, 1909. He praised after his death at \$240,000. was a native of Bielitz, Austria, widow \$58,000 in settlement of the where he was born in 1855. His father was a weaver and to that claims which she held against the trade he was apprenticed, but company on the contract of sale and though little educated he felt early longings for the stage and began a theatrical career as a supernume- Mahler's retention were obviously rary in the Burgtheater in Vienna made, no doubt in good faith, to alwhen he was eighteen years old. lay the fears of a large contingent Under the name of Robert Buch- of the opera's patrons that the Gerholz he was a member of theatrical man branch of the repertory, alcompanies in Leipsic, Berlin and ready in the shadew, was to suffer Bremen. He came to New York in a total eclipse. The manner in which 1878 to be stage manager at the his Italian associate was introduced Germania Theatre - a German to the public was not calculated to house-in Tammany Hall. Ma- quiet suspicion. Mr. Otto H. Kahn thilde Cottrelly lured him to the invited reporters for the newspapers Thalia Theatre, in the Bowery, of to the opera house and introduced playhouse, in conjunction with Carl scribed the new general manager as Hermann, he brought von Possart, a gentleman to whom was due apthe first of a number of stage celeb- preciation of Wagner's dramas in

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Grau for the Metropolitan, though JRING a large part of the she did not come to its stage till

> Though Mr. Conried was frequently in financial straits while manager of the Irving Place Theatre his estate was officially ap-The Metropolitan Company paid his

Mr. Dippel's appointment and Mr.

did she, amid the horrors of the this manner were preposterous. Mr. tained the diploma of a naval en-Gatti had been director of the Mi- gineer. His studies in the humani-It was as director of the Irving lanese theatre ten years, while near- ties and music were privately con-Place Theatre at a later date that he ly all of Wagner's operas and ducted. At the end of 1893 he was won wide recognition and attracted dramas had been performed in Italy called to succeed his father, Stethe attention of the native American from ten to twenty years before he fano (who had been one of Garielement of the city's population went to Milan. Thus "Rienzi" was baldi's "Thousand" and a Senator by his production of the German produced in Venice in 1874, in Bo. of the Kingdom of Italy-he died man classics and modern comedies. logna in 1876, in Florence in 1877, in May, 1918), in the board of di-The recognition thus won put him in in Rome in 1880; "The Flying rectors of the Teatro Comunale, the line of succession as manager of Dutchman" had its first perform in Ferrara, and about the same the Metropolitan Opera House. His ance in Bologna in 1877, "Tannhau-time was made superintendent of only operatic experience before the ser" its first representation in the the musical institute, Frescobali, in attainment of that distinction was same city in 1872, "Lohengrin" was the same city. In 1898 he was made the Casino, where he staged a num- York); Florence heard the opera in tre. in Italy, and in that position he ber of operettas, among them "The 1872, Rome in 1878, Genoa in 1880, remained until called to New York. Gypsy Baron," to which his thoughts Venice and Naples in 1881. For the The Case of the and affections returned when he rest the records of La Scala disachieved his ultimate eminence. A close that "Die Meistersinger" had Two Managers large fraction of the financial suc- been brought forward on its stage in had also been picked out by Mr. 1888, 1889 and 1891, and up to 1898, kure" was given fourteen times in achieved a footing in New York. The the letter continued, "in the mana-announced the speedy production of

over, the entire Nibelung tetralogy popular subscription and the per-

neer work consisted of Italian per- memoirs; in the remainder of this I

formances of "Das Rheingold" and must concern myself chiefly with a "Siegfried" in Milan. These facts I controversy which resulted from the

time and their critical point was not managers representing divergent

Mr. Kahn to a Tribune reporter) perienced in the methods of operatic

was an operatic coach who had been management; Mr. Dippel was a nov-

accompanist to some of the singers ice. Mr. Gatti was familiar with at the Metropolitan Opera House the wiles of prime donne, the and was the husband of Mme. Noria schemes of publishers, the personal

(Miss Ludwig), who had sung in aims which often actuate wealthy

Mr. Savage's American company patrons of art, and knew when it and a peripatetic troupe calling itself was wise to defer and when to op

which Mr. Centanini had been as- tist's knowledge of the artistic tem-

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which she was director, and to that to them "Count" Centanini, who de sistant conductor. Of course he may perament, had been suddenly ele- of Otto H. Kahn, William K. Van- Alda and Signori Bonci and Amato. have been a count, for all that; he vated to a dizzying altitude in the derbilt and Frank C. Griswold, re- The five singers who had signed the became Mr. Gatti's secretary. Giulio Gatti-Casazza deserved a about practical affairs as a few to the public press. rities whom he was instrumental in Italy, that appreciation having fol- better sponsor and a less flamboy- years of service as a banker's clerk bringing to this country; among lowed his production at the Scala of ant introduction. He was born in could teach him. The popular opinthem Sonnenthal, Barnay, Helene "Die Meistersinger," "Siegfried" Udine, Italy, on January 3, 1869; ion, fairly based on the declaration Opera Odilion and Kathi Schratt, the last of whom became the favorite and intimate companion of the Austrian of German art in Milan were income. Reale School Superiore at Genoa, the services of Mr. Mahler and Mr. intimate companion of the Austrian of German art in Milan were incon- Reale Scuolo Superiore at Genoa, Herz, should have a free hand in the Emperor, Franz Josef, who died, as testable, but the claims advanced in and when twenty-two years old obas stage manager for operetta com- heard in Bologna in 1871 (the year general manager of the Teatro semblance to the title of panies and for Rudolph Aronson at of its first performance in New della Scala, the most famous theahouse owning company). In this letas a pikestaff that Mr. Gatti's word proud and great institution, the Metplated that he should be director of Mr. Gatti spent the summer of Gatti and Toscanini a contract of tors and the lovers of a broad policy came director of the opera by his vision was laid on December 15, 1908. of November 8 cess of the early years of his Metro- 1890 and received sixteen perform. 1908 in Italy and returned to New Theatre played in the operation of German plays at the Theodore Roosevelt, President of the New Theatre played in the operation of German plays at the Theodore Roosevelt, President of the New Theatre played in the operation of German plays at the Theodore Roosevelt, President of the New Theatre played in the operation of German plays at the Theodore Roosevelt, President of the New Theatre played in the operation of German plays at the Theodore Roosevelt, President of the New Theatre played in the operation of German plays at the Theodore Roosevelt, President of the New Theatre played in the operation of German plays at the Theodore Roosevelt, President of the New Theatre played in the operation of German plays at the Theodore Roosevelt, President of the New Theatre played in the operation of German plays at the Theodore Roosevelt, President of the New Theatre played in the operation of German plays at the Theodore Roosevelt, President of the New Theatre played in the operation of German plays at the Theodore Roosevelt, President of the New Theatre played in the operation of German played in the operation o politan management was due to ances; "Tannhäuser" in 1893, also York on October U. He repeated express a desire "in the protection of Consent of Mr. Gatti. The general Irving Place Theatre. By encour- United States, sent a letter to the life of the city will be disclosed Enrico Caruso, whose services he receiving the same number of per- the lamentation over the paucity of our (their) artistic interests and the manager hastened to allay the aphad acquired under a contract made formances. "Lohengrin" was in the opera singers in Italy and France, welfare of the Metropolitan Opera prehensions of the public by stating the universities be become almost a contract made formances. "Lohengrin" was in the opera singers in Italy and France, welfare of the Metropolitan Opera prehensions of the public by stating the universities be become almost a contract made formances. "Lohengrin" was in the opera singers in Italy and France, welfare of the Metropolitan Opera prehensions of the public by stating the universities be become almost a contract made formances.

gelo Neumann's German company. The fruits of the season in the field the Metropolitan Opera House." On subscription, but with advanced

eyes of the world and knew as much plied to this leter and gave the reply communication to the directors were Payne Whitney, M. Orme Wilson ner" was sung. In the

politan Opera Company (it had ob- Mr. Gatti's contract for two more tained the new title by appeal to the years was signed with an abrogation page of the Chronicle of Scandal in Edgar V. Seeler. From the begin- who courts after the Secretary of State of an optional terminating clause order to open one which tells of an ning of the enterprise Mr. Conried Shakespeare on of New York had refused to give contained in the first contract, and idealistic endeavor on the part of the had been relied on for expert tech- advice to the play it the name because of its re- Mr. Dippel was left to work out his gentlemen to whom New York is in- nical advice, though I have been as- the phrase; the possible salvation. It was as plain debted for the maintenance of that sured that it never was contemter, which was not made public till was law in all matters of artistic ropolitan Opera House. Proud and the theatre. the controversy of which it was a policy and would so remain for the great it is despite the follies comfeature of great interest was over, ensuing two years, even if Mr. Dip- mitted by some of its managers. Mr. went to Messrs. Carrère & Hastings, hearsal of the writers said that having heard pel remained in office in deference Conried, as I have noted, had drawn and the cornerstone of the beautiful with which drawn the theatre we of a movement to grant Messrs, to the wishes of some of the direc- attention to himself before he be- building erected under their super-Dippel be granted that the patrons of the opera should Metropolitan the same privileges under contract have ample opportunity to listen to national figure. He dreamed a with your aims to give special en- \$3,250,000. when Mr. Gatti came, had had forty- company. Only one of them, Pas- that may be acceded to the above French and German works, and as dream of a national theatre endowed 1894, "The Flying Dutchman" eight official prospectus for the approach- gerial and artistic capabilities of Mr. "Tristan und Isolde," with Mr. Mah-MONDAY EVE., SEPT. 2 (Labor Day)

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times in 1893 and "Götterdämme- ing season had been published in the Dippel gives us sufficient reason to ler as conductor. The protestations with the aid of the men of wealth and social prominence by whom he conducted by Anton Seidl in Venice, of artistic achievement will be dis-Bologna and Rome. Mr. Gatti's pio- ct ssed in the next chapter of these of the board of directors, composed artists appearing in it were Mme.

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Singers Intercede for Dippel, Who Is Nevertheless Routed — Controversy Between Managers and Projection of New Dramatic Venture

found himself surrounded. He couragement to both playwrights an broached the idea of an endowed the- actors who are native to our our atre to his associates in the opera soil, and I observe with especia company, but the directors, after seriously discussing it, decided that it was not the province of their corporation to undertake the task. As individuals, however, some of them joined a new organization, which set the establishment of an ideal theatre

The founders of the institution which gave New York what was first called the New and is now the Governor of the State of New Yo opera during a few years following Mayor of the city, were John Jacob Astor, George F. H. Finley, pre-Baker, Edmund L. Baylies, August of the City of New York, in an Belmont, Cortlandt Field Bishop, dress on the relation of prayer an Paul D. Cravath, William B. Os- the drama, said: good Field, Henry Clay Frick, El- could make its playhouse a playhouse a playhouse bert H. Gary, George J. Gould, Eliot where it played what it wanted to Gregory, Archer M. Huntington, when it wanted to be at its best f James H. Hyde, Otto H. Kahn, W. playhouse would do a Mackay, J. Pierpont Morgan, James ical life as the prayer house." Stillman, Hamilton McK. Twombly, gustus Thoma Robert B. Van Cortlandt, Cornelius dress, derbilt, Henry Walters, Harry sion and "The Star should have been made public but March 28, 1906, the founders of the box containing the not the letter itself. Mmes. Sem-Metropolitan brich and Eames having already building committee composed expressed their intention to re- Charles T. Barney, Otto H. Kahn, an ode by Percy MacKaye and MacKaye Harry Payne Whitney, Eliot Greg- Gilder's poem, together with a ciates did not ask for their signatures to an explanation, which was published on December 11, to the effect that Mr. Dippel had not suggested the letter and that no animosity toward Messrs. Gatti and feet deep on West Sixty-third Morgan presided, Percy MacKay Street. The jury that passed on ode was sung, Governor Hughes H. R. Winthrop, Heinrich Conried, Root had spoke It is a pleasure to turn down this Stanford White, Donn Barber and ertson read to the theatre's acte

universities he became almost a am, of course, in cordial sympathy founders



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